

**Department of Historic Resources
Reconnaissance Level Survey**

Accomack

DHR Id#: 001-0027-0115

Resource Identification

Property Name(s): WFF # Y-030 – Blockhouse #2 {Current}
Control Center 1 {Historic}
Property Date: 1950
Address(s): Island Road {Current}
County/Independent City: Accomack
Vicinity of: Chincoteague
State, Zip: Virginia 23337
USGS Quad Name: WALLOPS ISLAND
Surrounding area: Rural

National Register Eligibility Status

Property is Historic (50 years or older)

Resource Description

Ownership Status: Public - Federal
Acreage: 0.5

Primary Resource Exterior Component Description:

<u>Component</u>	<u>Comp Type/Form</u>	<u>Material</u>	<u>Material Treatment</u>
Chimneys	Chimneys - None		
Foundation	Foundation - Slab	Concrete	Foundation - Poured
Porch	Porch - None		
Roof	Roof - Flat	Concrete	
Structural System	Structural System - Masonry	Concrete	
Windows	Windows - Fixed	Metal	Windows - 1-light

Site Description: Located within a fenced compound on the east side of Wallops Island, Blockhouse #2 is in a level area consisting of paved concrete areas interspersed with lawn.

WUZIT Count:

<u>No.</u>	<u>Wuzit Types</u>	<u>Historic?</u>
1	Air-Related	Historic

NR Resource Count:

Individual Resource Information

WUZIT: Air-Related

Est. Date of Construction:	1950 {Oral/written data}	Accessed?	No	Not accessible
Primary Resource?	Yes	Number of Stories:	1.0	
Architectural Style:	Other	Condition:	Good	
Interior Plan Type:	Other	Threats to Resource:	Deterioration	Neglect

Description: The tall, one-story concrete building has a poured concrete slab foundation and a very thick, flat poured concrete roof which slightly overhangs the poured concrete walls of the building on all four sides; the roof materials are not visible. The edge of the roof is clad with aluminum flashing arranged in four, stepped sections. A short small projection, with an aluminum louvered vent on the southeast side, extends up from the roof surface near the north corner. Eight small, fixed-pane windows/observation ports in metal frames are recessed into the thick concrete wall of northeast elevation. Two similar windows are found on the southeast elevation flanking the center bay that projects slightly and connects to a shorter, square-plan section of the building –originally the Bombproof Observation House – via an overhang that covers an open walkway separating the two. A modern wood stair rises from the southeast to the top of the shorter section, turns 90 degrees, and continues up onto the top of the taller, larger section. A steel apparatus (likely used in conjunction with firing and other circuitry in launches), is embedded into the south corner of the shorter section, extending somewhat on the southeast elevation and a longer distance on the southwest. The apparatus has 17 steel, box-like units with two handles each that are hinged to connect with a projecting steel mount or switch above. It appears the apparatus is no longer in use. The northwest elevation contains a centrally placed opening containing a set of steel double doors. Two openings, each containing an aluminum roll top door, flank the center doorway. The concrete is slightly ramped around the base of the roll top doors.

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Cemetery Information

Bridge Information

National Register Eligibility Information

Historic Context(s): Technology/Engineering

Historic Time Period(s):..... S- The New Dominion (1941- Present)

Significance Statement: This one-story building was built in 1950 by NACA and was part of the second phase of permanent NACA construction efforts on Wallops Island. Originally known as Control Center #1, the building was built as the principal building of a launch complex that incorporated elements of the first temporary launching area on Wallops Island, including the Bombproof Observation House which overlooked the first, 50 x 50-foot concrete launch pad (which was later expanded in 1950 to its current size of 600 feet long by 50 feet wide). The Control Center was built onto the back of the Observation House and was placed in the center of the complex, as a radial arm aligned northwest-southeast inside of a paved circular drive, and located to the immediate west of the actual launch area. All controls over the launching of test vehicles and rockets were maintained from inside the Control Center, including checkout, countdown, firing of circuits, and launch. Now part of WFF, the building is located on the east side of Island Road. Launch Area #2 (001-0027-0016, WFF# Y-035) with the three associated launch pads located to the east. The entire launch complex is located within a fenced compound; a narrow concrete drive connects the complex to Assembly Shop #1 (001-0027-0113, WFF# Y-050), located to the south.

The building is associated with a technology/engineering property type built during the New Dominion Period (1945 – present) period. The building was constructed as a component of a rocket research facility operated by the Pilotless Aircraft Research Station (PARS) under the direction of NACA from 1946 to 1958. Until becoming part of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) in 1958, PARS functioned as a rocket research facility that continually refined its capacity to collect aeronautic and scientific data through improvements in radar tracking, radio telemetry, and photographic techniques that provided significant data for the development of Cold War missile technology and manned spaceflight during the Space Race.

Control Center #1 has been evaluated both as a contributing resource in a historic district and as an individual resource. Issues of significance, integrity, and district boundaries were carefully considered. A proposed district comprising this resource lacks integrity of design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association due to the demolition of many of the buildings from the period of significance (1936 to 1959), the removal of much of the historic fabric from the majority of extant buildings, and the construction of later buildings. Thus a historic district here is not eligible under Criterion A, B, C, or D.

The resource is not eligible for listing in the National Register or the Virginia Landmarks Register under Criterion A, B, C, or D. It does not by itself sufficiently embody a quality of significance associated with events in order to be eligible under Criterion A, nor does it sufficiently embody a quality of significance associated with a person in order to be eligible under Criterion B. While the resource retains its location, setting and association, alterations to the building have adversely affected its integrity of design, materials, workmanship and feeling, including the in-fill of original openings and the replacement of original windows and doors. Therefore the resource is not eligible under Criterion C as it does not embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or represent the work of a master, or possess high artistic values, or represent a significant or distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction. This property does not have the potential for providing additional information in history or prehistory under Criterion D.

Bibliographic Documentation

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Reference #: 1

Bibliographic RecordType: Book

Author: Joseph Adams Shortal

Citation Abbreviation:

Notes: Shortal, Joseph Adams. "A New Dimension—Wallops Island Flight Test Range: The First Fifteen Years." National Aeronautics and Space Administration Scientific and Technical Information Office: 1978.

Ownership Information

Graphic Media Documentation

<i>Medium</i>	<i>Depository ID #</i>	<i>Photo Depository</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>File Name</i>
35mm B&W	21543	DHR	2004/07/99	Frames 12-15

Cultural Resource Management (CRM) Events

CRM Event # 1,

Cultural Resource Management Event: Reconnaissance Survey

Date: 2003/08/08

Organization or Person: URS Group

VDHR Project ID # Associated with Event: .. 2003-0571

CRM Event Notes or Comments: 7101 Wisconsin Avenue, Suite 700
Bethesda, MD 20814

CRM Event # 2,

Cultural Resource Management Event: Reconnaissance Survey

Date: 2004/07/99

Organization or Person: URS Group

VDHR Project ID # Associated with Event: .. 2003-0571

CRM Event Notes or Comments: 200 Orchard Ridge Drive, Suite 101
Gaithersburg, MD 20878